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ROTATING ELECTRICAL MACHINE AND DRIVE SYSTEM
OF CAGE INDUCTION MOTOR

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a rotating electrical machine, of which a rotor comprises a cage conductor, and a drive system of a cage induction
5 motor.

JP-A-7-231630 discloses a rotating electrical machine, in which rotor conductors of a cage induction motor are sectioned along a plane perpendicular to a shaft to comprise a lower portion enlarged stepwise in
10 width as compared with an upper portion positioned near to an outer periphery of a rotor. Also, "Transformer/induction machine/AC commutator motor" published by Institute of Electrical Engineers, 6th edition, November 21, 1983, pages 311 to 315 (Fig. 3.63, Fig.
15 3.64, and Fig. 3.67) discloses a rotating electrical machine, in which rotor conductors have the same cross sectional shape as that in JP-A-7-231630 and the cross sectional shape of the rotor conductors over a whole height thereof tapers linearly toward an outer
20 periphery of a rotor to be trapezoidal in shape.

The rotor conductors disclosed in JP-A-7-231630 have an inverted T-shaped cross section such that the upper portions of the rotor conductors positioned near to the outer periphery of the rotor are

small in width and the lower portions are enlarged stepwise in width. Therefore, high resistance is generated at the starting of a rotating electrical machine, so that starting characteristics of the rotating electrical machine can be improved. On the other hand, since the rotor conductor is enlarged stepwise in width and the rotating electrical machine is sharply reduced in secondary resistance, the rotating electrical machine is reduced in torque.

Also, coming-out of the rotor conductors due to centrifugal forces is restricted only by the steps of the rotor conductors. Therefore, centrifugal forces concentrate on the steps and the rotor conductors are in some cases broken by friction. Further, since the rotor conductors are sharply changed in width, a high technique is needed for processing of the rotor conductors in the case where a drawn material is used for the rotor conductors.

Meanwhile, with the rotating electrical machine of "Transformer/induction machine/AC commutator motor", the cross sectional shape of the rotor conductors tapers over a total height thereof toward the outer periphery of the rotor to be trapezoidal in shape, so that high resistance is generated at the starting of the rotating electrical machine and a starting characteristics of the rotating electrical machine is improved. Since the rotor conductors are trapezoidal-shaped, however, a height thereof and a

width of a bottom thereof are determined by restriction
in strength, there is little freedom in design, and a
starting characteristics and a steady-state
characteristics of the rotating electrical machine are
5 not balanced in some cases.

It is an object of the invention to provide a
rotating electrical machine having starting
characteristics of low starting current and high
starting torque, and a good balance between a starting
10 characteristics and a steady-state characteristics.

It is a further object of the invention to
provide a drive system of a cage induction motor, in
which alternating current with a commercial frequency
remaining intact is supplied directly to the induction
15 motor to realize a characteristics of low starting
current and high starting torque, and a characteristics
of high efficiency and high power factor.

Other objects and features of the invention
will be made apparent from the following description of
20 the embodiments.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one aspect of the invention, the rotor
conductors comprise a rotor conductor upper portion,
which is positioned near to an outer periphery of a
25 rotor, and a cross sectional shape of which tapers
continuously toward the outer periphery of the rotor,
and a rotor conductor lower portion, which is

contiguous to the rotor conductor upper portion to be positioned nearer to a center of the rotor than the rotor conductor upper portion, and a cross sectional shape of which is made rectangular to have
5 substantially the same width as that of a bottom of the rotor conductor upper portion.

Here, it is desired that a cross sectional shape of the rotor conductor upper portion be trapezoidal to taper linearly toward the outer
10 periphery of the rotor.

In another aspect of the invention, brass is used to make the rotor conductors and the rotor conductor upper portion has a height of not less than 27 mm.

15 In a further aspect of the invention, copper is used to make the rotor conductors and the rotor conductor upper portion has a height of not less than 7 mm.

In a still further aspect of the invention,
20 the rotor conductor upper portion is made of brass and the rotor conductor lower portion is made of copper.

Owing to these features, a rotating electrical machine is achieved to easily meet demanded steady-state characteristics such as efficiency, power
25 factor, and so on while restricting a starting current and ensuring a starting torque.

In a further aspect of the invention, the rotor conductors comprise a rotor conductor upper

portion, which is positioned near to an outer periphery of a rotor, and a cross sectional shape of which tapers continuously toward the outer periphery of the rotor, and a rotor conductor lower portion, which is
5 contiguous to the rotor conductor upper portion to be positioned nearer to a center of the rotor than the rotor conductor upper portion, and a cross sectional shape of which is made rectangular to have substantially the same width as that of a bottom of the rotor
10 conductor upper portion, and a switch is provided for applying to the stator coils voltage of a commercial three-phase AC power supply with a commercial frequency remaining intact.

Therefore, a drive system of a cage induction
15 motor is provided to restrict a starting current of a three-phase induction motor, to which three-phase alternating current with a commercial frequency is supplied directly, and generate an adequate starting torque and to exhibit an excellent steady-state
20 characteristics such as efficiency, power factor, and so on.

Other objects and features of the invention will be made apparent from the following description of the embodiments.

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 includes a cross sectional view showing an essential part of a cage induction motor

according to an embodiment of the invention and a view showing a configuration of a drive system;

Fig. 2 is a cross sectional view showing an essential part of a rotor according to the embodiment
5 of the invention;

Fig. 3 is a graph indicating slip/torque characteristics of the induction motor according to the embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 4 is a graph indicating starting
10 characteristics and steady-state characteristics of the induction motor according to the embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 5 is a graph indicating starting characteristics and steady-state characteristics of an
15 induction motor according to a further embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 6 is a graph indicating a starting characteristics and a steady-state characteristics of an induction motor according to a still further
20 embodiment of the invention; and

Fig. 7 is a cross sectional view showing an essential part of a rotor according to a further embodiment of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

25 The invention will be described below in detail on the basis of embodiments as shown.

Fig. 1 includes a cross sectional view

showing an axial cross section of an upper half of a cage induction motor according to an embodiment of the invention and a view showing a configuration of a drive system of the induction motor. A stator 10 of the cage
5 induction motor comprises a stator core 11, a multiplicity of stator slots 12 formed at spaces near to an inner periphery of the stator core 11, and stator coils 13 embedded in the slots 12. The stator core 11 comprises an axial laminate, both ends of which are
10 secured by core holding members 14.

Meanwhile, a rotor 20 comprises a rotor core 22 laminated on and fitted into a shaft 21, both ends of the rotor core being secured by core holding members 23. A multiplicity of slots 24 are formed at spaces
15 near to an outer periphery of the rotor core 22 to extend radially, and rotor conductors 25 are provided to be embedded into the slots 24. The reference numeral 26 denotes a short ring.

The invention achieves an improvement in
20 configurations of the rotor slots 24 and the rotor conductors 25 received therein. As shown in an enlarged, cross sectional view taken along the line A-A, with the embodiment, a cross sectional shape of the rotor conductors 25 is composed of an upper
25 trapezoidal-shaped portion tapered linearly toward an outer periphery of the rotor and a lower rectangular-shaped portion contiguous to the upper portion and having substantially the same width as that of a bottom

of the upper portion. This will be described in detail later.

Also, provided as a power-supply unit is a switch 33, by which three-phase alternating current received by an incoming panel 32 from a commercial three-phase AC power supply 31 is supplied to the stator coil 13 of the three-phase induction motor while a commercial frequency remains intact (through non-medium of any variable frequency inverter).

Fig. 2 is an enlarged view showing an essential part of the rotor 20, according to the embodiment of the invention, as sectioned in a direction perpendicular to the shaft. A plurality of the rotor slots 24 are provided at predetermined spaces in a circumferential direction of the rotor core 22 and the rotor conductors 25 are received in the slots 24. In the case of a cage induction motor of 10 MW class, the rotor conductors 25 have, for example, a total height $h_0 = 60$ mm, and a ratio $W_1/W_2 = 1/3.25$ of a width W_1 at an upper end thereof and a width W_2 at a base thereof. Here, a rotor conductor upper portion 251 positioned near to the outer periphery of the rotor 20 and having a height dimension h_1 has a trapezoidal, cross sectional shape linearly tapering toward the outer periphery of the rotor. Meanwhile, a rotor conductor lower portion 252 positioned contiguous to the rotor conductor upper portion 251 and nearer to a center of the rotor 20 than the rotor conductor upper

portion 251 and having a height dimension h_2 has a rectangular, cross sectional shape having a width W_2 substantially equal to a bottom of the upper portion 251.

5 According to the first embodiment, the rotor conductor upper portion 251 positioned near to the outer periphery of the rotor 20 has a cross sectional shape linearly tapering toward the outer periphery of the rotor 20 and thus being trapezoidal. However, the
10 cross sectional shape is not necessarily linear but can be curved gently.

 With the cage induction motor, current passes through the whole rotor conductors 25 in a steady state while current passes only in the vicinity of outer
15 peripheries of the rotor conductors 25 due to influences of the skin effect at the starting. Therefore, by tapering the width W_1 of the rotor conductor upper portion 251, according to the embodiment, near to the outer periphery of the rotor
20 20, secondary leakage reactance is increased at the starting and so a starting current can be reduced. Also, by tapering the width W_1 near to the outer periphery of the rotor, secondary resistance is
increased at the starting and so a starting torque can
25 be increased. Further, by making the width W_2 near to the center of the rotor larger than the width W_1 near to the outer periphery of the rotor, an increase in secondary leakage reactance and secondary resistance is

restricted, so that an improvement in characteristics in a steady state can be achieved.

Fig. 3 is a graph indicating a slip versus torque characteristics of the induction motor, according to the first embodiment of the invention, in contrast to that of JP-A-7-231630. With a construction of JP-A-7-231630, a starting torque T_{st} and a maximum torque T_{max} are good but a width of rotor conductors is sharply increased in a stepwise manner and secondary resistance is sharply reduced. Therefore, a motor torque T_c is reduced around a middle speed, that is, in the vicinity of slip $s = 0.5$ as shown in the figure. In contrast, with the construction of the rotor conductors 25 according to the embodiment, a width of the rotor conductors 25 is gently increased from W_1 to W_2 , and so it is possible to obtain a torque characteristics T_m free from torque reduction in the vicinity of a middle speed.

Also, with the construction of JP-A-7-231630, coming-out of rotor conductors due to centrifugal forces is restricted only by the inverted T-shaped steps. Therefore, centrifugal forces concentrate on the steps and the rotor conductors are in some cases broken by friction. In contrast, with the rotor conductors 25 according to the embodiment, a whole inclination portion of the upper portion shown in Fig. 2 extending over the height h_1 sustains coming-out of the rotor conductor 25 due to centrifugal forces.

Accordingly, it is possible to relax concentration of centrifugal forces to prevent breakage of the rotor conductors 25 due to friction as compared with the construction of JP-A-7-231630.

5 Further, in the case where a drawn material is used for the rotor conductors 25, the construction of JP-A-7-231630 needs a high technique for processing of the rotor conductors since a width of the rotor conductors is sharply changed in a stepwise manner.

10 Meanwhile, the rotor conductors 25 according to the embodiment involve no sharp configurational change in that portion thereof, in which a width thereof changes from W_1 to W_2 , so that drawing of the rotor conductors 25 is made easy.

15 Meanwhile, with the rotating electrical machine of "Transformer/induction machine/AC commutator motor", in which rotor conductors are inclined over a total height thereof to be trapezoidal in shape, the rotor conductors are restricted in height h_0 and widths W_1 , W_2 at upper and lower ends thereof due to the trapezoidal shape thereof. Therefore, there is no freedom in design, and starting characteristics and steady-state characteristics are not appropriately balanced in some cases. In contrast, with the

25 construction of the rotor conductors 25 according to the embodiment, it is possible to freely select a height h_1 for the rotor conductor upper portions 251 and a height h_2 for the rotor conductor lower portions

252. Accordingly, there is produced freedom in design, and starting characteristics and steady-state characteristics are appropriately balanced with ease.

Hereupon, a rotating electrical machine
5 having the rotor conductors 25 according to the invention is effective specifically in large-sized cage induction motors, in which the switch 33 shown in Fig. 1 leads the commercial three-phase AC power supply 31 in directly for use while a commercial frequency
10 remains intact. It is thought that large-sized cage induction motors generally have the same efficiency in rated operation as or higher than that of converter/inverters. Therefore, it can be said that the drive system of the cage induction motor, according to the
15 embodiment, leading a commercial three-phase AC power supply in directly for use is a motor system having a highest efficiency in rated operation for use at a constant speed.

Also, a demand for reducing a power supply
20 facility for rotating electrical machines in capacity to reduce an initial cost thereof is deep-rooted. Accordingly, existence of the rotating electrical machine according to the invention is significant, which machine does not need any converter/inverter and
25 unites the starting characteristics of low starting current and high starting torque and the steady-state characteristics of high efficiency and high power factor.

Fig. 4 is a graph indicating starting characteristics and steady-state characteristics of a cage induction motor according to an embodiment of the invention. Taken as an example are rotor conductors 25 having a total height $h_0 = 60$ mm and provided in the cage induction motor of 10 MW class described above. The graph indicates a starting current I_{st} , a starting torque T_{st} , a power factor P_f in a steady state, and efficiency E_{ff} in a steady state in the case where
10 brass is used for the rotor conductors 25 and a height h_1 of rotor conductor upper portions 251 is varied. Based on the characteristics, the rotor conductor upper portions 251 in the embodiment of the invention have a height $h_1 = 27$ mm or more. It is found that when the
15 height h_1 is not less than 27 mm, the starting current I_{st} can be reduced to less than 80 % while ensuring a starting torque T_{st} not less than that in the case where the height h_1 is 0 mm, that is, the rotor conductors are configured to be rectangular over the
20 entire height (left end in the figure). In addition, when the height h_1 is not more than 27 mm, the starting torque T_{st} is also reduced though the starting current I_{st} can be reduced.

Also, as apparent from the figure, it is
25 desired that an upper limit of the height h_1 of the upper portions 251 of the rotor conductors be not more than $h_1 = 46$ mm in order to ensure a power factor 0.975 in a steady state. This results in ensuring a height

h2 of ten and several mm or more for the lower portions
252 of the rotor conductors 25 and ensuring an
efficiency in a steady state.

Fig. 5 is a graph indicating starting
5 characteristics and steady-state characteristics of a
cage induction motor according to a further embodiment
of the invention. Likewise, copper is used for rotor
conductors 25 having a total height $h_0 = 60$ mm and
provided in a cage induction motor of 10 MW class.
10 Like that in Fig. 4, the graph indicates a starting
current I_{st} , a starting torque T_{st} , a power factor P_f
in a steady state, and an efficiency E_{ff} in a steady
state in the case where a height h_1 of rotor conductor
upper portions 251 is varied. Based on the
15 characteristics, the rotor conductor upper portions 251
in the embodiment have a height $h_1 = 7$ mm or more. It
is found that when the height h_1 is not less than 7 mm,
the starting current I_{st} can be reduced to less than
90 % while ensuring a starting torque T_{st} not less than
20 that in the case where the rotor conductors have a
height $h_1 = 0$ mm and are configured to be rectangular
(left end in the figure). In addition, when the height
 h_1 is not more than 7 mm, the starting torque T_{st} is
also reduced though the starting current I_{st} can be
25 further reduced.

Also, as apparent from the figure, it is
desired that an upper limit of the height h_1 of the
upper portions 251 of the rotor conductors 25 be not

more than 44 mm in order to ensure a power factor of 0.975 in a steady state. This results in ensuring a height of ten and several mm or more for the lower portions 252 of the rotor conductors 25 and ensuring efficiency in a steady state.

Fig. 6 is a graph indicating starting characteristics and steady-state characteristics of a cage induction motor according to a still further embodiment of the invention. Copper is used for rotor conductors 25 having a total height $h_0 = 30$ mm and provided in a cage induction motor of 100 MW class. Like those in Figs. 4 and 5, the graph indicates a starting current I_{st} , a starting torque T_{st} , a power factor P_f in a steady state, and efficiency E_{ff} in a steady state in the case where a height h_1 of rotor conductor upper portions 251 is varied. Based on the characteristics, the rotor conductor upper portions 251 in the embodiment have a height $h_1 = 7$ mm or more. It is found that when the height h_1 is not less than 7 mm, the starting current I_{st} can be reduced to less than 90 % while ensuring a starting torque T_{st} not less than that in the case where the rotor conductors have a height $h_1 = 0$ mm and are configured to be rectangular (left end in the figure). In addition, when the height h_1 is not more than 7 mm, the starting torque T_{st} is also reduced though the starting current I_{st} can be reduced.

Also, as apparent from the figure, it is

desired that an upper limit of the height h_1 of the upper portions 251 of the rotor conductors 25 (be) not more than 17.5 mm in order to ensure a power factor of 0.99 for induction motors of this class in a steady state. This results in fully ensuring a height 2 for the rotor conductor lower portions 252 to obtain a high efficiency in a steady state.

Fig. 7 is an enlarged view showing an essential part of a rotor 20, according to a further embodiment of the invention, as sectioned in a direction perpendicular to a shaft. A plurality of rotor slots 24 are provided at predetermined spaces in a circumferential direction of a rotor core 22 and rotor conductors 25 are received in the slots 24.

In the embodiment, the rotor conductors 25 comprise a rotor conductor upper portion 2511, which is made of brass and positioned near to an outer periphery of a rotor 20, and a rotor conductor lower portion 2521, which is made of copper to be positioned contiguous to a bottom of the rotor conductor upper portion 2511 and near to a center of the rotor. And the rotor conductor upper portion 2511 has a cross sectional shape continuously tapering toward to an outer periphery of the rotor 20, and the rotor conductor lower portion 2521 has a rectangular cross sectional shape having substantially the same width as that of the bottom of the rotor conductor upper portion 2511.

In this manner, the rotor slots 24 and the rotor conductors 25 are shaped in the same manner as in the embodiment shown in Fig. 2, and have the same dimensions as those illustrated in Figs. 2 and 4.

5 As described above, with the cage induction motor, current passes through the whole rotor conductors 25 in a steady state while current passes only in the vicinity of the outer peripheries of the rotor conductors 25 at the starting due to influences
10 of the skin effect. Therefore, those rotor conductor upper portion 2511, according to the embodiment, which are made of brass to be high in specific resistivity, increase secondary reactance at the starting, thus enabling the starting torque in the same manner as in
15 the embodiment shown in Fig. 2. Also, the use of copper of low specific resistivity for the rotor conductor lower portions near the center of the rotor restricts loss in the rotor conductor lower portions 2521 in a steady state to be able to achieve a higher
20 efficiency than that in the embodiment shown in Fig. 2.

 According to the invention, it is possible to provide a rotating electrical machine having characteristics of low starting current and high starting torque and a good balance between a starting
25 characteristics and steady-state characteristics.

 Also, it is possible to provide a drive system of a cage induction motor, in which alternating current with a commercial frequency remaining intact is

supplied directly to the induction motor, and achieves a characteristics of low starting current and high starting torque and a characteristics of high efficiency and high power factor.

5 It should be further understood by those skilled in the art that although the foregoing description has been made on embodiments of the invention, the invention is not limited thereto and various changes and modifications may be made without
10 departing from the spirit of the invention and the scope of the appended claims.